

**THE ESSENTIALS
OF FAMILY THERAPY**

Seventh Edition

THE ESSENTIALS OF FAMILY THERAPY

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*This book is dedicated to the memory
of Salvador Minuchin*

PREFACE

One thing that tends to get lost in academic discussions of family therapy is the feeling of accomplishment that comes from sitting down with an unhappy family and being able to help them. Beginning therapists are understandably anxious and not sure they'll know how to proceed. ("How do you get *all of them* to come in?") Veterans often speak in abstractions. They have opinions and discuss big issues—postmodernism, narrative reconstructionism, second-order cybernetics. While it's tempting to use this space to say Important Things, we prefer to be a little more personal. Treating troubled families has given us the greatest satisfaction imaginable, and we hope that the same is or will be true for you.

NEW TO THIS EDITION

In this seventh edition of *The Essentials of Family Therapy*, we describe the full scope of family therapy—its rich history, classic schools, latest developments—but with increasing emphasis on practical issues. We've also tried to make this edition more useful to students by introducing a number of new teaching points.

Our focus in the seventh edition was to make the key information from each chapter easier to capture and remember. We wanted you to come away from each chapter with a clear understanding of how each theory makes sense of change, and what each theory looks like in practice. Here's how we did that:

- Essential Points at the beginning of each chapter are brief summaries of the main ideas covered in the chapter.
- Questions to Consider at the start of each chapter are designed to help you apply the principles in the chapter to your situation, as well as to start thinking critically about the concepts and techniques as you read the chapter.
- Key terms are highlighted throughout and are also included as an end-of-book glossary in this edition
- Essential Highlights of the chapter are summarized at the end of each chapter.
- A Recommended Reading list is included at the end of each chapter.
- Review Questions and Reflection Questions at the end of each chapter are designed to help you think critically about the principles in the chapter and apply them to your life.

- New case studies with Reflect and Reply questions are designed to help you learn to think about how to apply therapeutic principles. All of the cases presented are drawn from our own practice or from experts in the field.

In addition to making the book more user-friendly, we've added quite a bit of new material in this edition, including:

- Research findings integrated into each chapter.
- A new chapter about research (Chapter 14), which includes a discussion of why research has failed to influence clinical practice and offering suggestions.
- Additional case studies and clinical emphasis throughout.
- Guidelines for productive problem-solving conversations.
- A more concise chapter on Bowen family systems therapy (chapter 4).
- Greater focus on clinical practice.
- New section in Chapter 10 on working with transgender persons.
- Significantly revised cognitive-behavioral chapter (chapter 9), with more focus on recent trends in clinical practice.

Albert Einstein once said, "If you want to learn about physics, pay attention to what physicists do, not what they say they do." When you read about therapy, it can be hard to see past the jargon and political packaging to the essential ideas and practices. So, in preparing this edition, we've traveled widely to visit and observe actual sessions of the leading practitioners. We've also invited leaders in the field to share some of their best case studies with you. The result is a more pragmatic, clinical focus. We hope you like it.

ALSO AVAILABLE WITH MYLAB HELPING PROFESSIONS

This title is also available with MyLab Helping Professions, an online homework, tutorial, and assessment program designed to work with the text to engage students and improve results. Within its structured environment, students see key concepts demonstrated through video clips, practice what they learn, test their understanding, and receive feedback to guide their learning and ensure they master key learning outcomes.

- **Learning outcomes and standards measure student results.** MyLab Helping Professions organizes all assignments around essential learning outcomes and national standards for counselors.
- **Video- and Case-based Exercises develop decision-making skills.** Video- and Case-based Exercises introduce students to a broader range of clients, and therefore a broader range of presenting problems, than they will encounter in their own pre-professional clinical experiences. Students watch videos of actual client-therapist sessions or high-quality role-play scenarios featuring expert counselors. They are then guided in their analysis of the videos through a series of short-answer questions. These exercises help students develop the techniques and decision-making skills they need to be effective counselors before they are in a critical situation with a real client.
- **Licensure Quizzes help students prepare for certification.** Automatically graded, multiple-choice Licensure Quizzes help students prepare for their certification examinations, master foundational course content, and improve their performance in the course.
- **Video Library offers a wealth of observation opportunities.** The Video Library provides more than 400 video clips of actual client-therapist sessions and high-quality role plays in a database organized by topic and searchable by keyword. The Video Library includes every video clip from the MyLab Helping Professions courses, plus additional videos from Pearson’s extensive library of footage. Instructors can create additional assignments around the videos or use them for in-class activities. Students

can expand their observation experiences to include other course areas and increase the amount of time they spend watching expert counselors in action.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

So many people have contributed to our development as family therapists and to the writing of this book that it would be impossible to thank them all. But we would like to single out a few. To the people who taught us family therapy—Lyman Wynne, Murray Bowen, and Salvador Minuchin—thank you. And special thanks with deep gratitude to Douglas Sprenkle and Fred Piercy.

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